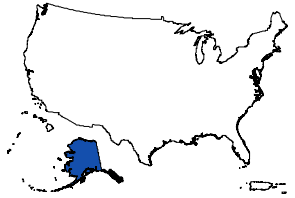


2000 Forestry Incentives Program



Customer Focus—

Earl Johnson arrived in Alaska over 40 years ago and began the homesteading life common to many newcomers. Ten years later Ed Schollenberg joined the many families settled in the Anchor Point area. This outdoor paradise was disrupted 4 to 5 years ago when spruce bark beetle populations soared into the multi-millions across the Kenai Peninsula. The economic impact on the local timber market was catastrophic. In 2 years, timber could not be given away because of the glut on the market. Ed knew he had to do something. "In my travels, I saw what they are doing in New Zealand (reforestation)." He had his 40 acres salvaged and harvested, and began seeking assistance to plant trees. His initial plan was to purchase and plant trees by hand with assistance by his granddaughter. After talking to the Alaska Service Forester and NRCS, he decided to use a local tree planting contractor and to participate in FIP. Within a day or so, 25 acres were planted with lodge pole pine, a species immune to spruce bark beetle and possibly more commercially valuable than spruce when harvested. "At least my grandkids will have a forest again, even if I won't, and just that makes the whole project worth it," Ed stated.

Earl Johnson was also convinced that salvage of dead spruce was the right thing to do. Dead trees don't make a forest," he said. "My grown daughters literally cried when they saw the harvesting. I owe it to them and the next generation to get trees growing again on my place." Earl is waiting for the next program year for funding of his reforestation project. In the meantime, he has applied for other assistance programs, such as Stewardship Incentives Program.

Alaska Summary

Overview

The State of Alaska has over 1 million acres of small Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) land parcels including those held by Alaska Natives. The current funding for Alaska's Forestry Incentives Program (FIP) is \$5,000 annually, which means only one landowner can complete a contract per year. The program is under used in Alaska because of a lack of funding. In the year 2000, requests for approximately 800 acres of land treatment contracts were made in this unsolicited and under sold program. Currently, a spruce bark beetle epidemic is occurring in south-central Alaska, an area with 75 percent of the State's population and NIPF parcels. This outbreak caused a rush of salvage harvest for both economic return and for fire protection. The outbreak is so severe that residual stands will not achieve proper stocking levels for commercial forest unless reforestation occurs. In cooperation with the Alaska Division for Forestry and Local Government, NRCS is targeting all FIP dollars as well as some EQIP and Stewardship Incentives Program (SIP) dollars to this ecological disaster, but the need far exceeds the available funding.

Accomplishments

Each year the FIP program assists a landowner in restocking 20 to 40 acres. In the initial stages of the spruce bark beetle outbreak, up to 40 acres of site preparation for natural regeneration was accomplished. However, at the current state of forest health in south central Alaska, natural regeneration is no longer an option. Tree planting has become the only alternative. In program year 2000, 25 acres of reforestation was accomplished with the FIP.

Outlook

Reforestation and other forestry practices are critically needed in Alaska. Without adequate funding, it is difficult to provide a program to hundreds of landowners knowing that only a single landowner can benefit. Program credibility is not high, and many individuals choose not to apply. An adequately funded program will allow the natural resource and forestry community to meet these needs.

State contacts

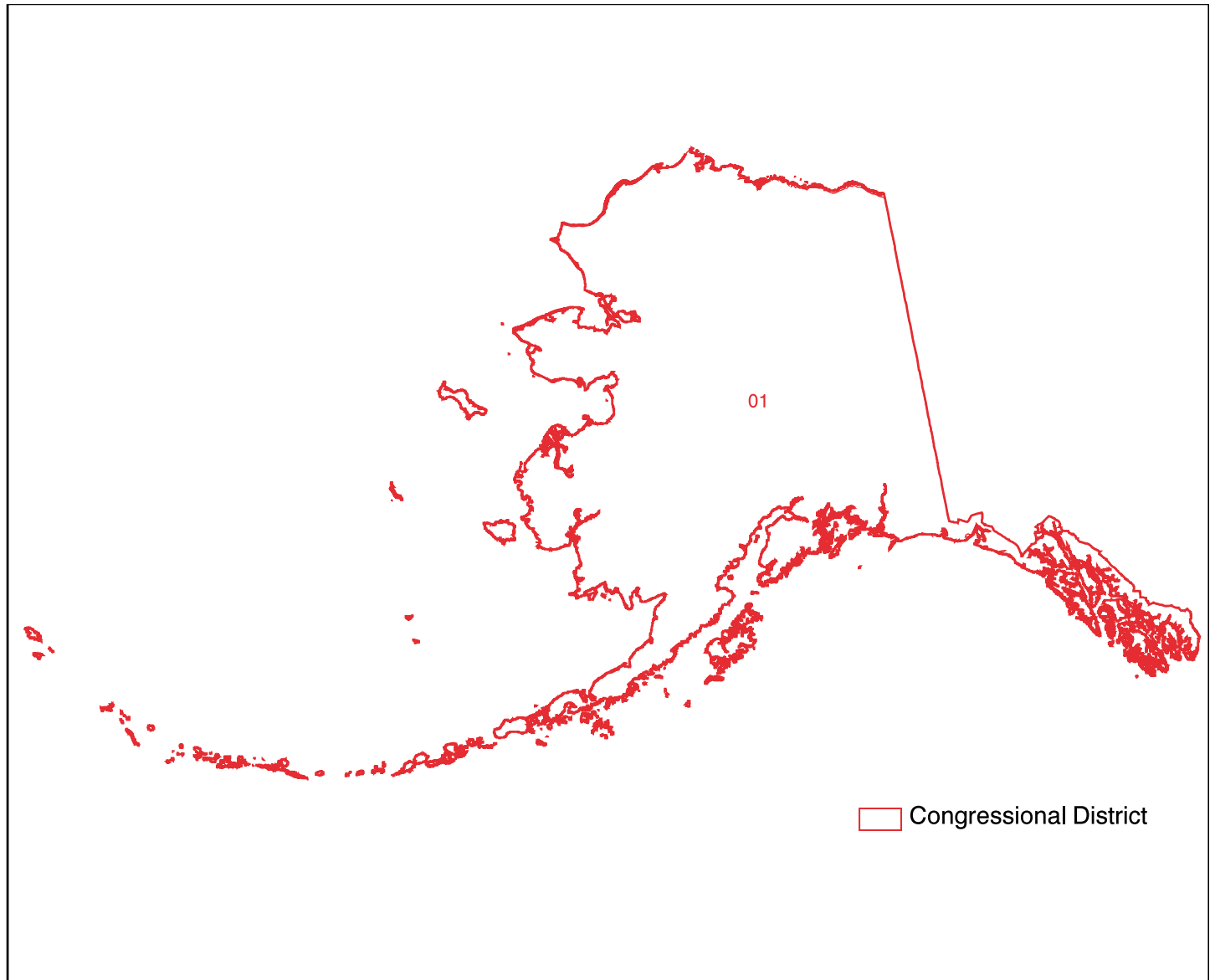
Mitch Michaud, NRCS State Forester, (907) 283-8732

Jim Schmidt, Assistant State Conservationist (907) 761-7757



Earl Johnson, left and Ed Schollenberg discuss tree planting at harvest site.

Alaska Congressional District



Alaska FIP Dollars and Contracts

Congressional District	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$4,400	1	\$19,764	4
State Totals	\$4,400	1	\$19,764	4

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